

SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: RFP-600261-07/BJC – State Lobbying Services for Seminole County Government

DEPARTMENT: Administrative Services

DIVISION: Purchasing and Contracts

AUTHORIZED BY: Frank Raymond

CONTACT: Betsy Cohen

EXT: 7112

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Select a firm to provide the County with State Lobbying Services in accordance with RFP-600261-07/BJC – State Lobbying Services.

County-wide

Ray Hooper

BACKGROUND:

On July 26, 1994, the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to present professional services that fall into the following categories unranked to the BCC: (a) major space initiatives; (b) audit services; (c) bond counsel; (d) financial adviser; and other major projects designated by the BCC. RFP-600261-07/BJC is one of those services that will provide lobbying services on behalf of the County to the State Legislature, Executive Branch agencies and the Office of the Governor. Services will include presenting policy recommendations to agencies and elected officials, monitoring legislation and policy as it pertains to the County's interest, securing public sector funding, and influencing legislation to the benefit of Seminole County. The firm must have sound knowledge of public policy, a clear understanding of the legislative process, solid political networks, knowledge of key-agency programs and staff, familiarity with current state and local issues, effective communication skills, and a successful track record in securing appropriations on behalf of similar public sector clients. The firm should also have demonstrated experience in bipartisan relationships with a network of access to legislators, administrative and relevant agency staff, and the Office of the Governor. The RFP document was posted on the County's website and broadcasted to firms registered with the County for lobbying services. RFP packages were sent to the two firms (Brantley & Associates and Young Van Assenderp, P.A.Inc.) that responded to the previous solicitation.

This project was publicly advertised and the County received four (4) submittals in response to the solicitation, listed alphabetically:

- McGrath Gibson, Jacksonville
- Ronald L. Book, P.A., Aventura
- Shutts & Bowen LLP, Tallahassee
- The Advocacy Group at Tew Cardenas, LLC, Tallahassee

The Qualification Committee, comprised of Cindy Coto, County Manager; Susan Dietrich, Assistant County Attorney; David Medley, Director, Community Services Department; and Lisa Spriggs, Director, Fiscal Services Department, evaluated the submittals. The qualification criteria included the following:

- Understanding of the scope of services and the County's needs, approach to successful completion of the work, special considerations, and possible difficulties in completing the work as indicated.
- Evaluation of information provided related to specialized skills available. Qualifications of all key personnel who will be involved in the delivery of services that include relevant experience.
- The approach to handling what will likely be a range of issues on behalf of the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners. Approach to issues identified as priorities by the Seminole County Board of County Commissioners which may be a combination of appropriations and policy matters.
- The existing relationships with the agencies of the State of Florida, the local Legislative Delegation, and with other key legislators and support staff.
- References and experience
- Proposed compensation

The Qualification Committee has provided comments which are included in the supporting documentation in regards to the following: **Highly Acceptable:** Submittal exceeds the requirements in a way that benefits the County or meets the requirements and has enhancing features which benefit the County. **Acceptable:** Submittal meets the County requirements. Any weakness is minor. **Marginal:** Submittal contains weaknesses or minor deficiencies which could have an impact, if accepted. **Unsatisfactory:** Submittal does not comply substantially with the requirements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests the Board select a firm to provide the County with State Lobbying Services in accordance with RFP-600261-07/BJC – State Lobbying Services.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Tabulation Sheet
2. Committee Comments

Additionally Reviewed By:

☒ County Attorney Review (Ann Colby)

<p align="center">B.C.C. - SEMINOLE COUNTY, FL RFP TABULATION SHEET</p>
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ALL RFP'S ACCEPTED BY SEMINOLE COUNTY ARE SUBJECT TO THE COUNTY'S TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND ANY AND ALL ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PROPOSERS ARE REJECTED AND SHALL HAVE NO FORCE AND EFFECT. RFP DOCUMENTS FROM THE CONSULTANTS LISTED HEREIN ARE THE ONLY RFP'S RECEIVED TIMELY AS OF THE ABOVE OPENING DATE AND TIME. ALL OTHER RFP DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS SOLICITATION, IF ANY, ARE HEREBY REJECTED AS LATE.

Page 1 of 1

RFP NUMBER: RFP-600261-07/BJC

RFP TITLE: State Lobbying Services for Seminole County Government

DUE DATE: September 26, 2007 at 2:00 P.M.

	McGrath Gibson 109 East Bay Street Jacksonville, Florida 32202 (904) 358-3300 – Phone (904) 358-3390 – Fax Michael McGrath	Ronald L. Book, P.A. 2999 NE 191 Street, PH6 Aventura, Florida 33180 (305) 935-1866 – Phone (305) 935-9737 – Fax Ronald L. Book	Shutts & Bowen LLP 215 S. Monroe Street, #804 Tallahassee, Florida 32301 (850) 521-0600 – Phone (850) 521-0604 – Fax Bobby Brantley	The Advocacy Group at Tew Cardenas, LLC 215 S Monroe St, #702 Tallahassee, Florida 32301 (850) 222-8900 – Phone (850) 841-7653 – Fax Slater Bayliss
Yearly Option	\$115,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$65,000.00	\$50,000.00

The evaluation criteria is as follows:

- Adequate professional/technical competence and qualifications of the firm and/or individuals; experience in similar work
- Past and current experience with governmental entities
- Relevant confirmation of references; reputation of the Proposer
- Location of the Proposer, accessibility
- Success of the Proposer in the legislative and regulatory processes

Status:

Tabulated by Betsy J. Cohen, Procurement Supervisor (Posted 9/27/2007 at 11:30 AM)

Evaluation Committee meeting: October 11, 2007 at 9:00 AM. County Services Building, Purchasing & Contracts Division Conference Room

Recommendation of award: None. Unranked to the Board.

BCC for selection and award: November 13, 2007 (Posted 10/11/2007 @ 4:15 PM)

Evaluations

RFP-600261-07/BJC - State Lobbying Services

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Congratulations on your selection as an Evaluation Team member!

Your evaluation is key in awarding quality contracts. You must examine each proposal against the evaluation criteria in the solicitation and provide supportive narrative for your selection. Are you willing to evaluate in a fair, comprehensive, and impartial manner? Are you willing to present a clear picture of the issues considered during the evaluation? I have read and will comply with the above requirements.:

Yes

Conflicts of Interest Statement - Policies and procedures address employee and elected official conflicts. ss. 112.313, Fl. Stat.; Seminole County Code; Personnel Policies and Procedures of Seminole County. Conflicts may occur when public officials or employees are in a position to make decisions which affect their private gain or the gain of family members and friends. County policy encourages the disclosure process to remind officials or employees of their obligation to put the public interest above personal considerations. I state that I have considered my obligation to put the public interest above personal interest.:

Yes

RESPONSE #1 - MCGRATH GIBSON:

0 – Unsatisfactory: Proposal does not comply substantially with the requirements.

Respondent #1 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

No comments.

Respondent #1 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract

Firm did not present work in lobbying, but as counsel. No indication lobbying activities for their clients. No experience indicated in Tallahassee, proposal indicates that office is forthcoming in Tallahassee. Appeared to not understand the scope of services being requested as proposed fee is high and seems to lend itself to services as legal counsel.

RESPONSE #2 - RONALD L. BOOK, P.A.:

1 – Marginal: Proposal contains weaknesses and minor deficiencies which could have an impact.

Respondent #2 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Client history broad and includes both Counties and Cities. Approach was presented in a very clear rational format for services being sought. Firm and individuals experienced and well seasoned.

Respondent #2 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract

Although discussion regarding advocating for funding and law revisions was provided, did not present specific examples of success in lobbying efforts. Proposal did not demonstrate success or failure with clients' legislative priorities. Seem to have a south Florida emphasis, which could have an impact on its ability to serve Seminole County Government.

RESPONSE #3 - SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP:

2 – Acceptable: Proposal meets the County requirements; any weakness is minor.

Respondent #3 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Firm has represented Seminole County Government successfully. Firm and individuals proposed to represent the County have the knowledge and understanding of the County's initiatives. Individuals are highly qualified in performance of requested services. Provided examples of successful efforts to secure funding for projects. Demonstrated relationships and understanding of state political climate.

Respondent #3 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.
No comments.

RESPONSE #4 - THE ADVOCACY GROUP AT TEW GARDENAS, LLC:

1 – Marginal: Proposal contains weaknesses and minor deficiencies which could have an impact.

Respondent #4 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Presented work in lobbying activities for various clients and discussed successes achieved. Approach was presented in a clear rational format for services being sought. Presented that the firm maintains good, and in some cases excellent, relationships with Seminole County legislative personnel. Firm and individuals experienced and well seasoned.



Respondent #4 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.
Referenced offices being in place in their respective communities "enabling them to have personal and professional relationships with the large South Florida legislative delegation as well as agency heads and staff who reside in Tallahassee...". Not sure how this would benefit Seminole County Government and could have an impact on ability to serve the community.

Created at 10/17/2007 10:34 AM by Spriggs, Lisa

Last modified at 10/17/2007 10:34 AM by Spriggs, Lisa

Evaluations

RFP-600261-07/BJC - State Lobbying Services

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Yes

Conflicts of Interest Statement - Policies and procedures address employee and elected official conflicts. ss. 112.313, Fl. Stat.; Seminole County Code; Personnel Policies and Procedures of Seminole County. Conflicts may occur when public officials or employees are in a position to make decisions which affect their private gain or the gain of family members and friends. County policy encourages the disclosure process to remind officials or employees of their obligation to put the public interest above personal considerations. I state that I have considered my obligation to put the public interest above personal interest.:

Yes

RESPONSE #1 - MCGRATH GIBSON:

1 – Marginal: Proposal contains weaknesses and minor deficiencies which could have an impact.

Respondent #1 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

The primary responsibility for representing the County appears to have been assigned by the Proposer to an individual with a certain, albeit limited, amount (six years) of experience analyzing legislation and experience working with different State agencies. The Proposer has an office in Tallahassee. However, the assigned individual does not appear to work from the Tallahassee office but rather from the Jacksonville office.

Respondent #1 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

Neither individual assigned to represent the Proposer appears to have previous experience representing clients in a lobbying capacity. The Proposal does not provide information as to other governmental clients currently or previously represented in a lobbying capacity. Further, no information has been provided as to current or previous successes in the legislative or regulatory process.

RESPONSE #2 - RONALD L. BOOK, P.A.:

2 – Acceptable: Proposal meets the County requirements; any weakness is minor.

Respondent #2 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Substantial expertise, competence and experience by both the named partner and the associates of the Proposer in a State lobbying capacity over many years. The Proposer has significant previous and current experience with governmental entities both inside and outside of the legislative process. The Proposer has a credible reputation in Tallahassee, an office in Tallahassee and substantial success in the legislative and regulatory process although specific legislative successes were neither identified nor provided.

Respondent #2 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

The geographical orientation of the majority of the Proposer's clients is in South Florida. Uncertain as to familiarity of the Proposer with Central Florida issues and individual representatives.

RESPONSE #3 - SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP:

3 - Highly Acceptable: Proposal exceeds the requirements and has enhancing features that will benefit Seminole County.

Respondent #3 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Significant level of expertise, competence and experience by the two individuals of the Proposer who would be providing lobbying services on behalf of the County. The specific individuals of the Proposer to provide the lobbying services are highly regarded throughout the State and have substantial legislative executive and agency experience both within and outside of those entities. Of particular note is the Proposer's established Governmental Affairs Section within its Tallahassee office with year-round active employees. The Proposer includes an extensive summary of successes achieved on behalf of its client and a list of previous and current clients.

Respondent #3 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract. None presented.

RESPONSE #4 - THE ADVOCACY GROUP AT TEW GARDENAS, LLC:

3 - Highly Acceptable: Proposal exceeds the requirements and has enhancing features that will benefit Seminole County.

Respondent #4 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Substantial degree of expertise, experience and competence by the four specifically identified lobbyists resident in the Proposer's Tallahassee office as well as the remaining five lobbyists resident in the Proposer's South Florida office. Of special note, the Proposer's Tallahassee based Advocacy Group section provides an impressive background of credentials in the legislative and executive governmental branches on both the Federal and State levels. The Proposer enjoys an outstanding professional lobbying reputation and has provided a summary of current and former clients and accomplishments achieved on their behalf in the legislative and regulatory process.

Respondent #4 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract. Clients and governmental relationships appear to be mostly partisan. Will the Proposer be able to ensure active and adequate representation of the County on both sides of the legislative aisle?

Created at 10/10/2007 8:57 AM by Kennedy, Lori

Last modified at 10/11/2007 8:52 AM by Cohen, Betsy

Evaluations

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Yes

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Yes

RESPONSE #1 - MCGRATH GIBSON:

1 – Marginal: Proposal contains weaknesses and minor deficiencies which could have an impact.

Respondent #1 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Presenter had a good "Firm Work Plan" which clearly delineates the responsibilities of individual members and process for review of work products.

Respondent #1 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

Firm did not present significant evidence of work in lobbying efforts. No indication of success in efforts to lobby for their clients in appropriate venues.

No previous experience cited in Tallahassee and office not located there (only forthcoming).

Also, rate of reimbursement was highest, and considerable out of line with other respondents.

RESPONSE #2 - RONALD L. BOOK, P.A.:

2 – Acceptable: Proposal meets the County requirements; any weakness is minor.

Respondent #2 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Respondent presented a very clear methodology for approaching the work required as a lobbyist. Respondent also included awareness of Seminole County specific issues that could be addressed in the upcoming legislative sessions. Also, respondent has office in the Tallahassee.

Job descriptions focus on relevant experience.

Also, Client History is very broad including both counties and municipalities.

Respondent #2 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

Does not present specific information on lobbying efforts and the success or failure of those efforts. Cannot really assess if proposer has the experience

and success to address Seminole County specific issues.

RESPONSE #3 - SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP:

3 - Highly Acceptable: Proposal exceeds the requirements and has enhancing features that will benefit Seminole County.

Respondent #3 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Having previously served Seminole County, respondent has a good connection with county's leadership and an understanding of the issues the county must address. Respondent also has extensive experience in Tallahassee in the legislative process.

Respondent also provides specific examples of successful efforts to secure funding for local projects.

Respondent #3 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

Did not clarify process they would use in addressing local issues.

RESPONSE #4 - THE ADVOCACY GROUP AT TEW GARDENAS, LLC:

3 - Highly Acceptable: Proposal exceeds the requirements and has enhancing features that will benefit Seminole County.

Respondent #4 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Good presentation of specific example of prior success and how it was achieved.

Also provided concise examples of other successess throughout the state in representing other clients, both municipalities and counties.

Also, provided information on positive relationship with specific legislative personnel.

Fee schedule appears consistent with others.

Respondent #4 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.

No noted weaknesses.

Created at 10/10/2007 3:17 PM by Medley, David

Last modified at 10/11/2007 10:10 AM by Medley, David

Evaluations

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Yes

RESPONSE #1 - MCGRATH GIBSON:

0 – Unsatisfactory: Proposal does not comply substantially with the requirements.

Respondent #1 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

None noted

Respondent #1 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract

No lobbying services listed. No details on how work would be accomplished. Unsure based upon response whether or not they have an office in Tallahassee. No prior Tallahassee presence noted in their proposal. Based upon proposal it appears they did not understand the scope of services. Fees listed are high.

RESPONSE #2 - RONALD L. BOOK, P.A.:

2 – Acceptable: Proposal meets the County requirements; any weakness is minor.

Respondent #2 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Client history is broad and includes cities and Counties. Firm and individuals listed appear to be experienced.

Respondent #2 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract

Did not provide specific examples of "success stories" of what their previous accomplishments were with their present or previous clients. Do not indicate who would be assigned to Seminole County account. Number of cities represented which has a potential for conflict of interest. Main office in South Florida and number of cities and Counties in South Florida. Unsure how familiar they are with Central Florida issues and with size of South Florida delegation how they could adequately represent Seminole County.

RESPONSE #3 - SHUTTS & BOWEN LLP:

3 - Highly Acceptable: Proposal exceeds the requirements and has enhancing features that will benefit Seminole County.

Respondent #3 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

.Firm has represented the County over a number of years and has institutional knowledge of our County and our issues. Provide examples of successful efforts for their clients.

Respondent #3 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.
None noted.

RESPONSE #4 - THE ADVOCACY GROUP AT TEW GARDENAS, LLC:

2 – Acceptable: Proposal meets the County requirements; any weakness is minor.

Respondent #4 - Strengths: Those areas in which the proposal exceeds the County's requirements:

Presented successes they had accomplished for previous and present clients. Good approach. Identified relationships with present Seminole County legislative delegation. Firm and individuals listed are experienced

Respondent #4 - Weaknesses: Those areas where proposal lack soundness or effectiveness which could prevent fully successful performance of the contract.
Majority of the work appears to be in South Florida. Unsure how these relationships would assist Seminole County. South Florida delegation is very large and question firm's ability to also serve Seminole County adequately.

Created at 10/12/2007 8:14 AM by Coto, Cindy

Last modified at 10/12/2007 8:14 AM by Coto, Cindy